Controversial Bioenergy Devco Gas Plant Public Comment Period Closes With Overwhelming Participation, More Than 75% In Opposition

Targeted News Service

December 6, 2022 Tuesday 8:30 AM EST

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Length: 709 words

Byline: Targeted News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

(TNSgov) -- The Food and Water Watch posted the following news release:

On Friday, the public comment period for Bioenergy Devco's controversial gas plant in Sussex County closed. As of Monday morning, at least 150 written comments had been filed, more than any other matter heard before DNREC this year, for which the agency posted online public comments. So far, more than 75% are in opposition to the project. After more than two years of sustained opposition by community members and environmental groups, the fate of the project is now squarely in the hands of Governor Carney and his appointed Secretary Garvin of the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC).

Bioenergy Devco is seeking a total of five permits from the DNREC Air Quality, Waste and Hazardous Substances and Water Divisions. Comments filed Friday by Food & Water Watch, Socially Responsible Agriculture Project (SRAP), and a diverse coalition of climate, justice, faith-based, and community organizations explain in detail that the proposed project is dangerous for Delaware's environment and will harm vulnerable communities in the area. They also lay out why DNREC would be violating the law and its obligations to Delawareans were it to greenlight the project. The Sussex Health and Environmental Network, Latino Initiative on Restorative Justice, Sierra Club Delaware Chapter, Delaware Working Families Party, Methodist Action Program, Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, NAMATI US Environmental Justice Program, and The Assateague Coastkeeper also signed onto the comments.

Commenters detailed that Bioenergy Devco's applications do not meet the requirements of Delaware regulations, fail to provide critical information about the project, and contain a slew of self-serving contradictions. DNREC's review of the permit applications and their proposed permits also fall far short and would leave vulnerable members of the community exposed to dangerous pollution and public safety hazards.

Food & Water Watch Attorney Tyler Lobdell said:

"Governor Carney and his state agencies have a solemn responsibility to safeguard the health of Delaware's climate, environment and people -- Bioenergy Devco's project endangers all three. Bioenergy's efforts to skirt Delaware's environmental protections and much needed oversight is beyond underhanded, it's unlawful. Bioenergy Devco's methane refinery threatens significant air, water, and soil pollution, as well as heavy traffic, and public safety concerns; it has no place in Delaware. Governor Carney and Secretary Garvin must deny Bioenergy its permits."

"From the start, Bioenergy Devco has been a dishonest actor in Sussex County," said Maria Payan, senior regional representative, Socially Responsible Agriculture Project and co-founder of Sussex Health and Environmental Network. "Flashy marketing and compost giveaways cannot paint over the reality that Bioenergy's project will bring

increased pollution to the community and our environment. Governor Carney's DNREC has an obligation to see through the company's greenwashing and deny this polluting gas plant its permits. The mere suggestion of bringing poultry waste from surrounding states into Sussex County is reckless and short-sighted and has no place in Delaware's clean energy future."

"To site a polluting factory farm gas project anywhere in Delaware would be unwise. To do it in this community would be unconscionable," said Charito Calvachi-Mateyko, Founder of the Latino Initiative on Restorative Justice, Inc. "Gas plants like Bioenergy Devco's pose significant dangers to the communities living nearest them, from an increase in heavy truck traffic on local roads to long-term health effects. We've heard from the communities living nearest this project, and time and time again the message has been the same -- Governor Carney and DNREC must keep Bioenergy Devco from setting up shop next door."

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Original text here: https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/2022/12/05/controversial-bioenergy-devco-gas-plant-public-comment-period-closes-with-overwhelming-participation-more-than-75-in-opposition%ef%bf%bc/

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Load-Date: December 6, 2022

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